

# Commander's Call Topics



**March 4, 2011**

*"America's exceptional stature is owed to our ability to be critical of ourselves and cautious, yet optimistic and undaunted—all at the same time, and in equal measure. In the great history of our Nation, we have endured ebbs and flows, ups and downs, successes and setbacks. On balance, we have leveraged cautious optimism with innovation and energy to tremendous effect."* – Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz during a [speech](#) at the 2011 Defense Programs Conference

## **FROM AIR FORCE SENIOR LEADERS**

### **General Schwartz: Austerity, strategic challenges call for true total force**

Austerity and the strategic environment make communicating and collaborating as a total force paramount for the Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, the Air Force chief of staff said during the 2011 General Senior Leadership Conference. General Schwartz called for applying energy and passion toward shaping the future as a truly cohesive team of U.S. service members, regardless of whether they are active, Guard or Reserve.

### **Vice CSAF emphasizes modeling, simulation integration during AFAMS visit**

Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Philip Breedlove emphasized the need to standardize live, virtual and constructive modeling and simulation across the Air Force and the joint team during a recent visit to the Air Force Agency for Modeling and Simulation. AFAMS is the Air Force's execution arm for exploiting, integrating and implementing Air Force simulation capabilities, resources, and policy and guidance.

### **CMSAF strengthens ties with Colombian partners**

*"I see Colombia as a leader in promoting regional stability, and the U.S. Air Force wants to continue to be a part of that effort,"* said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Roy during a visit to Colombian military sites.

## **CURRENT ISSUES**

### **President signs continuing resolution extension**

President Barack Obama signed legislation March 2 that will keep the government funded and running through March 18.

### **Air Force announces next tanker aircraft**

Air Force and Defense Department officials announced the award of an engineering and manufacturing development contract valued at more than \$3.5 billion for the KC-46A aerial refueler to The Boeing Company. The program expects to deliver the first 18 aircraft by 2017.

### **Officials release new environmental restoration policy**

Changes to the Air Force's environmental cleanup program will focus on cleaning up more sites more quickly. The intention is to shift emphasis from partial cleanup solutions that often require decades of expensive follow-up to complete cleanups that free up property more quickly for productive use.

## **PERSONNEL ISSUES**

### **Officials extend community assessment**

Officials are extending the opportunity to participate in the 2011 Air Force Community Assessment through April 3. Officials hope to capture experiences and opinions to help improve life for families in the Air Force. The survey takes approximately 30-45 minutes to complete. For more information, call 800-506-0098 or e-mail [afcasurvey@icfi.com](mailto:afcasurvey@icfi.com).

### **Developmental education deadline set for officers, civilians**

Officers considering intermediate or senior developmental education in 2011 have until March 31 to submit their applications; civilians have until May 1. Officers apply using a web-based application, while civilians submit a hard copy application to the Air Force Personnel Center Civilian Development Education and Training Branch.

### **Deadline near for first sergeant of the year award**

The deadline for submitting nominations to the Air Force Personnel Center for the 2011 First Sergeant of the Year award is April 22. The award recognizes the important contributions and leadership qualities exhibited by Airmen in the first sergeant special duty career field. For information, visit the [Air Force personnel services](#) website.

## **CIVILIAN**

### **Civilian employees should start education applications early**

Hundreds of professional development opportunities are available annually for civilian employees at all levels. Many of those slots go unfilled, in part because eligible candidates wait until the last minute to prepare and staff their application packages. Information on all civilian developmental education programs is available on the [AFPC Force Development](#) website.

### **NAF employees eligible for new health incentive credit**

Beginning Jan. 1, nonappropriated fund federal employees participating in the DOD Health Benefits Program may earn a \$100 health incentive credit when they complete the Simple Steps to a Healthier Life online health assessment or complete a routine physical exam. Participating family members may also earn the credit. More information about NAF employee benefits can be found at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nafppo>.

### **Deadline approaching for civilian humanitarian award**

The Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Award is presented annually to an individual or organization outside the Department of Defense that has demonstrated exceptional patriotism, generosity and selfless dedication to the members of the United States armed forces and their families through an outstanding humanitarian act or service. The deadline for submitting nominations to the Air Force Personnel Center is April 16.

## **FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **First lady, Dr. Biden to launch military family awareness campaign**

Dr. Jill Biden and first lady Michelle Obama will soon begin a campaign to raise awareness of military families. Dr. Biden encouraged people to visit [www.serve.gov](http://www.serve.gov) to share how they're supporting those who serve.

### **Program cuts sustain health care, maintain quality**

The fiscal 2012 budget calls for creating savings by cutting overhead costs, transitioning some patients to Medicare coverage and requiring modest increases in military health care enrollment fees for working-age retirees. Active-duty service members will continue to receive free health care, as will their family members who choose the TRICARE Prime system.

## **FINANCES AND EDUCATION**

### **DOD improves troops' access to quality education**

Defense Department officials are taking extensive measures, from education reviews to agency partnerships, to ensure service members have access to quality education and learning opportunities in their off-duty hours. Military officials are turning to technology to create more opportunities; working to ensure that tuition assistance dollars are well spent; and developing an online, automated tracking system to document issues and concerns.

## **RESOURCES**

### ***AF.mil***

<http://www.af.mil>

### ***Airman magazine***

<http://www.airmanonline.af.mil/>

### ***Air Force Community***

<http://www.afcommunity.af.mil/>

### ***Air Force Outreach***

<http://www.afoutreach.af.mil/>

### ***Military OneSource***

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/>

**Military HOMEFRONT**

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>

**Air Force Personnel Center**

<http://gum.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

**Air Reserve Personnel Center**

<http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/>

**Department of Defense**

<http://www.defense.gov>

**Department of Defense News**

<http://www.defenselink.mil>

**TRICARE**

<http://www.tricare.mil>

**U.S. Government Web site**

<http://www.firstgov.gov/>

**Employment Opportunities**

[www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com)

[www.nafjobs.org](http://www.nafjobs.org)

## **AIR FORCE HERITAGE TO HORIZONS**

### **This Week in Air Force History**

**March 4, 1954** – The Lockheed XF-104 Starfighter first flew at Edwards AFB, Calif.

**March 6, 1990** – Lt. Col. Ed Yeilding, pilot, and Lt. Col. J.T. Vida, range safety officer, set four speed records when they flew the SR-71A "Blackbird" into retirement at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. They flew a 2,404-mile course from Oxnard, Calif., to Dulles International Airport, Va., in one hour, eight minutes and 17 seconds at 2,112.52 mph for one record.

**March 7, 1942** – The first class of 93 enlisted pilots, who were known as "flying sergeants," graduated in Class 42-C from Kelly Field and Ellington Field in Texas. In June 1941 Congress passed Public Law 99, which authorized an enlisted pilot training program. The training was short-lived, however, ending in late 1942 because qualifications for the enlisted pilot and aviation cadet programs were made equal.

**March 7, 1942** – The first class of Tuskegee Airmen graduate from Tuskegee Army Air Field, Ala.

**March 10, 1966** – Maj. Bernard F. Fisher, an A-1E pilot, landed on the A Shau airstrip after it was overrun by North Vietnamese regulars to rescue downed A-1E pilot Maj. Dafford W. Myers. He is later awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic act and was the first Airman to be so honored in the Vietnam War.

**March 10, 1967** – F-105s and F-4Cs bombed the Thai Nguyen steel plant in North Vietnam for the first time. During this attack, Capt. Merlyn Hans Dethlefsen was awarded the Medal of Honor while silencing enemy defenses with his severely damaged F-105.

**March 10, 1977** – The first women navigator candidates reported to Mather AFB, Calif., to begin undergraduate navigator training.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>.

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